



**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF WALKER
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
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“No matter who you are, or where you are, you are welcome here!”

“Much Fruit”
Fifth Sunday of Easter
April 28, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Worship Leaders:
Pastor: Michael Small
Liturgist: Chris Kolp
Special Music: Celebrate
Greeter: Sue Grage
Keyboard: Leisa Bragg
Music Coordinator: Leisa Bragg

Tech: Aurora Diehl (Video), Esther Covert (Audio)
Spiritual Life, Chancel and Communion Preparation

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

HYMN

“Many Are the Lightbeams”

#163

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Psalm 22:25-31, John 15:4-11*)

One: God rules over the nations of the earth:

All: Peoples of the Pacific, families on farmlands, all worship God Almighty!

One: This One is God of our ancestors and our descendants.

All: In Jesus, we are connected to one another in a vine of covenant.

One: Bear and share the fruit of Christ's love

All: That we may proclaim a just world for all!

A TIME OF CENTERING

(During this time of centering, open your hearts to God; be in the present, here and now.)

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

One: Thank you, God, for delicious fruit from your Creation. Thank you for sun, soil, water, and farmers that help plants produce fruit for us to enjoy. And thank you that we can be connected to Jesus like branches on a grapevine. Help us to produce your fruit of love and peace. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE (*Psalm 22:30, John 15:1-2, 5-8, 1 John 4:12,17-18*)

All: Abundant God, we desire to be a part of your Vine of Love. Yet we confess how we have too often tried to assume your role as Holy Vine Grower: we have judged other branches as unworthy to be connected to us and we have tried to prune them off the True Vine saying “You don’t belong; you don’t produce fruit; you don’t produce the right kind of fruit; your fruit smells funny; you belong in the compost heap.” By living in our comfort zones and our arrogance, we have failed to see our own bad fruit of smug self-righteousness.

Can we even begin to ask forgiveness for ourselves so that the sins of our ancestors might not become the legacy of our descendants? Graft us back to abide in the true vine: entwine us in your lei of perfect love. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

(Each person can take this time to surrender to God privately anything weighing heavy on their heart.)

WORDS OF GRACE (*1 John 4:9-12,20; John 15:1, 5*)

One: God's love was revealed among us in this way: God's own beloved Child was sent into the world to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, so that we might live through Christ. On behalf of the God whom no one has ever seen, look into the eyes of the persons sitting next to you who you can see, and extend your arms as symbols of branches of Jesus, the true vine, and proclaim: “In God's love, you are forgiven.” Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Celebrate

SCRIPTURE: John 15:1-8

- 1 “I am the true vine,
and my Abba is the vine grower
- 2 who cuts off every branch in me that doesn't bear fruit,

but prunes the fruitful ones
to increase their yield.
3 You've been pruned already,
thanks to the word that I have spoken to you.
4 Live on in me,
as I do in you.
Just as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself
apart from the vine,
neither can you bear fruit
apart from me.
5 I am the vine;
you are the branches.
Those who live in me and I in them
will bear abundant fruit,
for apart from me you can do nothing.
6 Those who don't live in me
are like withered, rejected branches,
to be picked up and thrown on the fire and burned.
7 If you live on in me,
and my words live on in you,
ask whatever you want
and it will be done for you.
8 My Abba will be glorified
if you bear much fruit
and thus prove to be my disciples.

REFLECTION

"Bearing Fruit"

HYMN

"Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song"

#270

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison, using debts)

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Celebrate

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY (*Psalm 22:25-26; John 15:5,10-11*)

One: We praise God by sharing the abundant fruit of God's love with our sisters and brothers throughout the world, so that every empty bowl may be filled with enough rice, every empty plate covered with enough tortillas, every empty stomach satisfied with enough taro. Let us live in God's love so that our joy may be complete.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING (*John 15:1; 1 John 4:8,21; Psalm 22:26*)

All: Dear God, Holy Vine Grower, you are love. May the offerings we share today be a source of hope for the poor. Help us to live out your commandment to love others, not just because we reach out to them as our sisters and brothers, but also because as our sisters and brothers, they reach out to us as well. Amen.

HYMN

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You"

#4

PARTING WORDS

One: We love because God first loved us. You who love God must love your brothers and sisters also. Love one another. Go in Peace!

POSTLUDE

WI-FI – "Guest" Scan QR Code for Internet Access



Much Fruit: Liturgical Resources for the Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year B, and PAAM Sunday, was written by the Rev. Mitchell Young, pastor of Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC in Montebello, CA.

